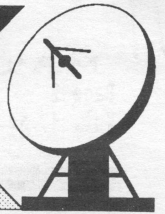


MATWATCH

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APRIL 15-28

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

VOL. 4, NO. 15-16

MATWATCH Extra

MY DECISION TO PASS UP THE WIDE WORLD OF WRESTLING

If you are a new reader of MATWATCH, this column will likely mean little. But for those of you who have been with us more than the last year and a half, I ask you to take a brief trip back through the time tunnel of the past few months with me.



Steve
Beverly

When one is a journalist, one finds it uncomfortable becoming the focus of the news, rather than the reporter of it. That has been all too true for me in both my primary profession and my avocation as a wrestling writer in the last two months.

Shortly before the new year began, speculation was running rampant of my impending decision to perhaps join the industry to which I have been on the outside looking in since the summer of 1988. To be quite honest, it was close to accurate. But a number of things happened to change my mind and in what has become somewhat the year of the confessional among wrestling newsletter editors, I feel now is the appropriate time to share them.

Most people in officialdom of pro wrestling would probably prefer we were not around. That's simply the natural rivalry between promotions and underground journalists. But we have earned, I'm proud to say, a smidgen of respect in most quarters. Enough so that we have occasionally been solicited as to our possible interest in full-time work within wrestling. To one who has followed the ring as a fan for 26 years, it becomes quite flattering. And as anyone who has been a voyeur of sport or the entertainment world, it becomes easy to see only the glamour and idealistic perspective. As my rookie television news people learn, glamour wears off once you work one of those unpredictable and unforeseen 15-hour days.

From the time Joe Pedicino began pursuing the idea of his own nationally-syndicated wrestling promotion, he insisted there was a place for me. I was honored he would consider me but did not take it seriously. The more Joe delved into the prospect of an organization, the more I realized he meant it.

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Will Join Titan

SID VICIOUS CHANGES MIND ON WCW CONTRACT

ATLANTA---One week after agreeing to terms on a contract renewal of World Championship Wrestling, Sid Vicious has changed his mind and told WCW officials he's leaving for Titan Sports.

The shocking turn of events developed Wednesday when Vicious (Sid Eudy) was in the Atlanta office, albeit to sign the new deal. Vicious reportedly told WCW executives, he had thought over the deal and decided to go on to the WWF. His last night with WCW will be at the May 19 pay-per-view SUPERBRAWL vs. El Gigante.

Vicious rejected a six-figure guarantee from TBS in favor of a no-guarantee offer from Titan Sports but sources have told us WWF chief Vince McMahon offered Vicious the main event at WRESTLEMANIA VIII against Hulk Hogan and that was a deciding factor.

April 3, Vicious agreed verbally to what had been a reported \$350,000-a-year deal, boosted by pay-per-view bonuses. Earlier that week, WCW insiders conceded Vicious was about to leave but hoped the eleventh hour offer Vicious in fact accepted would be enough to retain him. Paperwork was not ready for Vicious to sign on the Third.

Tuesday night in Columbus GA, Vicious received a heavy push at WCW/TBS tapings, based on assurances he would be staying. But MATWATCH learned Vicious told Georgia All-Star wrestler Nick Busich Wednesday of his change of heart. WCW officials were told the same day.

Shock and dismay has been the reaction from WCW. Says one insider who asked not to be named: "Really, the deal we offered was more than \$400,000 by the time you figured all the bonuses. And with that kind of money at stake, there's no doubt he would have had a run as the WCW world champion. The company would have had no choice."

When MATWATCH asked to reconfirm if the basic facts in last week's story on the Vicious deal were correct, we were told: "Oh, that was every bit right. He just went back on his word." MATWATCH has not been able to contact Vicious

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STEVE BEVERLY

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In the meantime, one year ago this week, I made the decision to leave four years in the academic world to return to the risky and grueling, yet rewarding, world of television news in Jackson TN. To be honest, I accepted an opportunity with what had a reputation for being a terrible television station. On my interview, I saw arguably the worst excuse for a local TV newscast I've ever seen. A news team with no leadership for seven months, factions within the newsroom, shoddy morale and even shoddier equipment. It was enough to scare most people off but I took it on, believing my past experience in this field could be a help and a challenge I professionally needed.

I made a commitment to the ownership of WBBJ, with the understanding that to rebuild this shop would take a period of years and their mutual commitment to move with us and support us financially and technologically. Early on, it became evident that the commitment was apparently not mutual. After a small flurry of ownership support in the first six weeks, momentum came to a standstill---well before this country and the television industry, in general, went into a recession. Other assurances had been misrepresented. Clearly, the strain and irritation over the stagnation led to my physical collapse last August. I soon began to search for a quick alternative.

Joe cajoled us enough that my wife and I finally agreed to go to Atlanta in December to seriously talk to Joe, his impending wife Boni and Olu Oleyami (Joe's principal financier) in what was to be the Global Wrestling Federation. A salary which would make one's eyes bulge was discussed. Talk about one's heart having a match with one's head---this was it.

Let me digress momentarily to say this is not a column on the merits of the lack of progress with Global. That's another column and any of you holding your breath for a dramatic bashing of Joe Pedicino are going to be sorely disappointed.

Simultaneously, speculation began in other newsletters about my pending change. Part of my offer was to be host of the weekly PRO WRESTLING '91 program with Scott Hudson, who is doing a class job in his first stint at color commentary.

I didn't mind the speculation. First, it's a natural association because Joe is one of my closest friends in the industry. Second, Joe and I had a firm understanding I was to have a contract and have it okayed by an attorney before I would make this dramatic change in my life. He enthusiastically agreed. Of course, Joe jumped the gun and announced on a January edition of PW'91 that I was going to be the new host. That set fireworks going off everywhere. Joe forgot to edit the announcement from the tape. I had been offered no contract because Global was delayed in getting off the ground and PW'91 was to be a small part of my responsibilities. Joe apologized but none was needed.

The ensuing 30 days were among the most troubled, yet, thoughtful of my life. The work situation at WBBJ was marginal, at best. The breakout of the Persian Gulf War compounded my responsibilities with more than 6,000 troops from west Tennessee on active duty. Plus, two colleges knocked at our door, one in our native Georgia.

When Global failed to materialize after Christmas, it led to enormous criticism of Pedicino. I felt badly for Joe because it became clear going public with his plans as early as

he did opened the door for a lot of disappointment from wrestlers and hard-core MATWATCHers. And I further knew the public accusations of a "hoax" or that Joe had deliberately misled people were not true. People are entitled to their opinions but, just like mine, they are strictly that---opinions. His projections were based on the advice and timetables he had been given by his potential backers. If anything, Joe had been misled. If you don't buy my view, ask Hudson. Ask Bill Radie.

But for me, the delay was the greatest thing which could have happened. It gave me an opportunity to reflect on the step I was on the verge of taking. Plus, I had long stated publicly the success, failure, start or finish of Global would not affect my friendship with him. I'd like to think that is the same quality of my friendship with most people. If Dave Meltzer were to stop doing THE WRESTLING OBSERVER tomorrow, I would still be his friend. If Jim Ross was no longer the top host for WCW next week, I would still be his friend. If two of my most kindred subscribers, Dick Bourne and Mike Gunter, with whom I've had the privilege of breaking bread and sharing wrestling nights at the Omni were in need, I'd hope I could be one of the first to offer help.

After Global stalled and some of the explosion over it erupted, I took two or three weeks of deep soul-searching and then discussed it with the most important one in my life---my wife. She has had more patience with me than any one human being could. She's followed me in a safari around the Southeast during my broadcasting and academic career. She has sacrificed many, many Saturdays while I was glued to the tube in attempting to put out this publication (and to the person from Brooklyn who wrote to ask last week---yes, I watch most of the shows I cover in TV TEMPO, except for the ones not offered in my area. Some of those I see on tape shortly afterward).

Rebecca is not a wrestling fan. Never will be. It's just not in her makeup or interest and that's never been a problem. She has been extraordinarily supportive of my work with MATWATCH because she has seen it be a nice respite from the intense pressure under which I work.

I remembered back to the night at Joe and Boni's home in Kennesaw GA. Rebecca likes the Pedicinos, was amused when Joe and Boni came to visit us here in October and Joe encountered indigestion from eating four kinds of spaghetti sauce on the same dish and was impressed with the advanced intelligence of Joe's 13-year-old son, Vince. But I knew Rebecca was not comfortable with the wrestling environment. In our December evening in Atlanta, when the men retired to Joe's office, the wives and girlfriends were downstairs. The conversation stayed predominantly on wrestling and my wife was lost. I realized, after serious thought, that a good bit of life would be that way if I was employed in the industry. I wasn't happy about that and I told Rebecca so. But she did not want that to stop me, should I decide to do it.

But I, further, began to examine me. The thing which continued to revolve inside of me is whether I could be genuinely happy in that environment. Where petulance is a password of behavior, where life is a "crisis a minute" (as Jim Herd has often told me) and where friendships are all too fragile.

It was the latter aspect which bothered me most. I work in a field where rivalries and egos can be strong because of the competition for success. Today's television news star can fall from grace as quickly as a bad rating sweep develops and it can lead to intense conflicts. But the peripheral exposure I have had to the inside of wrestling is of a far less secure, more strife-ridden world. I began to see one-time close relationships of Pedicino's crumble over the delay of Global. Some of them pained me greatly, as they involved mutual friends and people I still call friends. Situations I would

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still like to see rectified. I've seen other mutual friends openly split over petty differences, some of which I will admit we in the newsletter game have often agitated because conflict, after all, is news.

Further, in my three years as a newsletter editor, I do not think it is any great secret that a friend I valued and whom I endorsed for a position with a major wrestling organization has openly broken relations with me for nearly a year because of disagreements over some of my MATWATCH columns. I still consider the man a friend and probably have been more hurt and disappointed over this than any negative experience related to this newsletter. I still hope the relationship can be rectified. I don't know if it can as long as I have an opinion.

I came to the conclusion that this is not the kind of environment with which I would be happy. It's similar to the time in 1981 when I was approached about running for mayor of Columbus GA, certainly the most outrageous idea of our time. A group of people, based on their respect for my investigative coverage of City Hall, claimed to have the financing necessary to mount a competitive campaign. It didn't take me nearly as long to squash that idea. A student of politics I have always been and I put my heart into becoming a watchdog for the taxpayer. But mayor? You're suddenly beholden to a lot of people, your family is constantly under a microscope and your time is no longer your own. Those, in themselves, are part Fed Ex package (not parcel, Rossie, to avoid the All-Cliche Team) why few journalists have ever gone on to successful careers in elective office. It's an awful lot more appealing to be on the outside looking in than to be on certain playing fields.

I cannot stand to be in the forefront of a lot of conflict. I'm just not that kind of person. I don't run from it. As a boss, it inevitably happens with staffers. But I never have enjoyed it. Try working for Herb White at Auburn University for four years, whose trademark is confrontational management, and see how you'd enjoy it.

Whether real or imagined, my perception is wrestling is too full of conflict and fragile relationships and insecurity that on closer examination, I simply could not see myself a part of it. Further, I had spent too much of my life in a specific career direction and, on second look, I wasn't sure wrestling as a permanent profession genuinely fit the plan for my life.

None of this is to suggest any contempt for anyone in the wrestling profession. I have enjoyed knowing people like Eddie Gilbert. Controversial Eddie may be but he's an engaging conversationalist and a wonderful storyteller. But he's used to the tensions of wrestling as a business as he grew up in it. Joe, Ross, Lance Russell, Jim Cornette, Craig Johnson and a host of people I would get in immense trouble for revealing their names are cherished friends and wrestling has done well by them. I simply do not feel it would be right for me. I wrote Pedicino to tell him and followed with a phone call. I further explained that my wife and I have decided to explore either adoption or foster parenting later this year to begin a family and I didn't want to make that drastic a change while we pursued something so personally important. As the man I have always known him to be, he accepted it with grace---disappointed but supportive of what I felt was the right move for me. Consequently, any rumors---and some have been published---of a split in our relationship is pure bunk.

I have been perfectly content with this decision. It's much like Gail Sheehy's book, *PASSAGES*, in which she writes how we reach certain stages of our lives and never go back.

This has been like getting to the edge of a cliff but not quite jumping. A feeling of relief sets in that helps you learn more about yourself.

So how does this all relate to that semi-important announcement I promised? As I related earlier, with the feelings of abandoned commitment from the ownership at WBBJ, we began listening to feelers to return to academia. We were offered a very flattering position in the School of Journalism of a respected midwestern university. But we did not feel we could make ends meet on the salary, nor were we enthralled with the locale. A month later, Georgia College (not the University of..., my alma mater) in Milledgeville GA offered us a combination teaching/media services position which whetted our interest. We were offered the opportunity to come to work at the end of this month.

We did not want to move. After traveling the Southeast for 11 years and creeping up on the age of 40, we crave setting down roots. Jackson is not a bad little town and has enough amenities to satisfy us. People are far more laid back here than in even other parts of the Southeast but are extraordinarily friendly. And many of them love wrestling. But things were at a near-intolerable point here.

Relatively certain of moving, I had made a decision to end this publication at the end of July. I felt making another move and trying to re-establish ourselves in a new job and a new home were too taxing and too important that I would likely not be able to maintain my personal standards for this publication. Whether you agree or disagree with us, we have tried to make MATWATCH not a waste of your time or money.

Plus, I have been doing a lot of examination about where this industry is going, along with the newsletter business. Frankly, the bulletin market is more oversaturated than TV wrestling shows. At last count, there are 46 underground wrestling publications on the market. In one sense, that's good because in a free enterprise system, competition is healthy and makes us all strive to be better. It also promotes more diverse viewpoints. However, many of them are simply not original enough to be successful. That's not a knock. It's an honest perception. Some people have carved out a nice niche with some excellent specialty publications. Not to slight anyone but of the newer ones, I've particularly enjoyed the work Paul MacArthur and Dave Skolnick put into *WRESTLING PERSPECTIVE*, a thought-provoking analysis bulletin. Sheldon Goldberg's *MAT MARKETPLACE* and Jeff Cohen's *FANTASY FEDERATION* are well-focused specialty newsletters. And if you like nostalgia, Evan Ginzburg's *WRESTLING THEN AND NOW* is a newer effort which fits like a soft shoe. Jeff Mullins' *PRO WRESTLING SUSHI* and Brian Tramel's *RASSLIN' RIOT* have cornered the humor market. But some others are poorly-written, poorly-researched and shoddily-produced.

I've been outspoken about my feelings on publications which lean toward raw profanity and sexual content. I will defend, as a champion of the First Amendment, the right of the editors to publish such material. And I will readily tell you there are those in the wrestling audience who enjoy that kind of content. I don't happen to find that kind of material appealing and I'm concerned about it getting into the hands of unsupervised children. But I'm not going to attempt to impose a moral publication standard on someone else except to say you won't read it here. Simply, if there is an audience for them, those bulletins will succeed. If not, they'll fold.

Further, I have eschewed the so-called "sheet wars." Every month or two, another editor will try to draw me into one by asking what I think about what this one has said about me, or that one, usually a knock. Frankly, I don't have time to get involved in "sheet wars." I think they're a waste of the readers' time. If I answered all my critics, that's all I'd

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have time to do. Most people buy newsletters for news, perspective, quality of writing and results. I didn't start MATWATCH with hopes of any major success, nor did I do it to try to put any other newsletter out of business. I've done it because it has been a personally interesting and enriching diversion. Either you like it or you don't and nobody points a gun at anyone's head to subscribe.

I admire anyone having the guts to try publishing one of these and if one succeeds, I'm happy for them. Young Mike Sawyer is a new entrant with LEGDROP. He's already had some interesting and controversial interviews with industry figures. Whether Mike sustains it depends on four things: time, interest, quality and profits. But he's making a good start.

I have confided in some close industry friends of my consideration concerning the future of MATWATCH. Most of them have been kind enough to offer support and express hope a way can be found to continue it.

In the last two weeks, some dramatic changes have occurred. I told my staff of my offer the night of March 18 and THE JACKSON SUN, our local newspaper, reported it in its March 23 edition. However, my boss---one of the finest men you'll ever meet, Tommy Spain, was quoted as saying, "We're making a counteroffer and we hope to keep him."

Often one does not know the impact one has until one reaches the cutting edge. Over a 10-day period, one of the most heartening outpourings of emotion was shown us. Mostly by average, grass roots people, people I largely have never met. We answered more than 300 phone calls at work and at home from viewers throughout west Tennessee asking us to stay here. They included our United States Congressman and our mayor. But the most important response came from eight of the nine members of my staff (the ninth one I'm convinced has never liked anybody or anything but he does have talent) who attempted to persuade us to stay.

At the eleventh hour and 59th minute, a conference call was set up with the owner of our station. For more than two hours, these people listened. And made tangible commitments to immediate improvements at a cost of more than \$50,000, along with a purchase of a long-overdue new transmitter at a cost of half-a-million dollars. Further, I have been offered the expanded role of operations manager of this station with broader authority to make necessary changes to improve this television station. I agreed to stay with the caveat that if in six months, I become convinced the commitment is no longer mutual, I will go back on the job market with the intention of leaving without negotiation.

How the added chores are going to affect MATWATCH is anybody's guess. The stress and demands of maintaining a weekly publication take their toll when one has a demanding full-time profession, particularly one as deadline-filled as mine. Plus, my wife is owed some time in a bank that has been filled with interrupted weekends. And if we do begin a family, it is going to make a further inroad on my time.

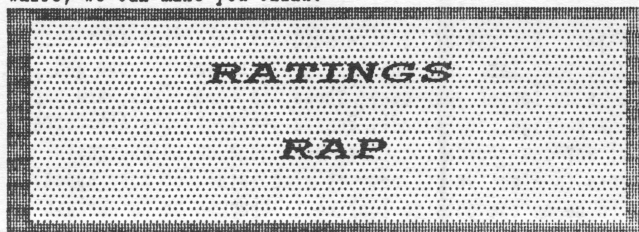
Since we are not going to make the move and face another transitional adjustment, I have decided to continue MATWATCH through the end of the year and then make the final decision on its direction. I have respectfully asked for subscriptions to be kept within the 16-week time frame because I am trying to keep from heavy financial commitments to subscribers. Please understand that need.

We may explore several options. One possibility is to take a full three months off early next year to clear the cobwebs and try to resume in the spring of 1992. Another is to back

off altogether except for two or three special annual-length editions per year, which we would try to make a printed version of a pay-per-view. All of it is going to depend on the demands of my work over the next few months and the need to have more personal time. If I reach the point where I feel I cannot devote the energies to maintaining my personal standards and the ones you, as loyal readers, hold us to, I will walk away from MATWATCH and leave the field to the young, hungry newcomers in our rather bunched pack.

As I stated at the top of this piece, newer MATWATCHers may not get the point of all of this. But the last few months have taken us full circle in the direction of our career and our perspective on wrestling. I like wrestling but it is far from my whole life. And I would be less than candid if I said the week-in, week-out developments are as fun to follow as they once were. And I must confess to being very, very tired. However, I still enjoy the friendships and the fellowship by phone and in person with you and those within the industry. That, in itself, is what has kept me going through some very difficult times.

Hopefully, the many of you who have been with us since the beginning have been able to grasp a bit more about who we are. We'll continue to try to give you the best we have to give in the hopes our diversion can be yours and maybe once in a while, we can make you think.



RING RATINGS DROP ACROSS THE BOARD

A post-Easter spring erosion set in to the weekly cable ratings race for the period ending April 9 as every WWF and WCW series lost audience.

PRIME TIME WRESTLING again led the way but only by a slim one-tenth of a rating point margin. PTW, keynoted by a guest appearance from Roddy Piper, posted a 2.6 rating and 4.2 per cent share of audience in its Tuesday night slot. PRIME TIME dropped 7% from its April 2 airing.

PTW eked out a win over WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, which finished only 20,000 homes behind. WCW, toplined by a Sting/El Gigante vs. Arn Anderson/Sid Vicious main event, finished with a 2.5, down 4% from the previous week.

From there, the news was more grim. WCW MAIN EVENT fell 19% from its numbers of a week ago. POWER HOUR sank under a million homes for only the second time in six weeks.

The biggest fall from grace went to ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING, just two weeks ago the top show of the week. ALL-AM sank 24% from the March 31 edition and 52% from the hot numbers of WRESTLEMANIA Sunday and dropped to last place. The 5.8 per cent share for ALL-AM was its lowest in at least two years.

In syndication, ratings were available from the post-WRESTLEMANIA week ending March 31. The WWF had a solid three-and-a-half point lead over WCW but the 9.8 rating was down a full point from last year's post-WM week.

In two weeks, quarterly ratings for cable series.

(Ratings posted on Page 12.)

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I have been very pleased to see some lines from SATURDAY NIGHT AT RINGSIDE make your list. I have been a fan of SNR for several years and am tickled to see it get some recognition in your newsletter. I also feel Mick Karch is a quality wrestling journalist and am happy when he gets some national recognition.

MICHAEL FRAME
ST PAUL MN

We in Minneapolis are very happy to see Mick Karch get a boost from MATWATCH. I'm certainly glad he had the guts to put Verne Gagne in his place for his tasteless remarks about Bruiser Brody.

STEVEN JANKOWSKI
MINNEAPOLIS MN

Have to disagree with you saying the Missy Hyatt dressing room interview "fell flat" (at WRESTLE WAR). I thought Missy did the best acting she's ever done, while (Stan) Hansen was hilarious getting her out of the dressing room. I also thought the first five minutes of WAR GAMES (Pillman-Windham) were incredible---wrestling at its finest.

JEFF ZINGER
WOODSTOCK ONT CANADA

It's sad to see Memphis wrestling out of the Mid-South Coliseum but there is always going to be changes in the wrestling business. We can only hope for the best with USWA and reflect on the good times with Memphis wrestling presented at the Coliseum.

VINNIE CAROLAN
STOUGHTON MA

In your recent articles about the declining appeal of wrestling you missed the most important reason of all. Most fans know that wrestling is a "work." The only way that any of the wrestling organizations can regain fan acceptance is to let the wrestlers go at it for real. Why does wrestling have to have bookers and predetermined outcomes? If WCW let the wrestlers go at it for real maybe they would mention WCW on CNN sports and CNN HEADLINE NEWS. Ric Flair cannot be considered an all-time great wrestler since he never wrestled for real. All of his matches were "worked" like a Hollywood movie. I would love to hear Jim Herd's reason for not letting the wrestlers go at it for real.

JOHN RIORDAN
BELMONT MA

Whether classified as blooper or dreaded glitch, did you hear what The Brain said on the post-WRESTLEMANIA PRIME TIME from Vegas? Or what an open mike picked up an off-camera Brain as saying? Koko B. Ware was singing and just about to

pull the Brain on camera to do The Bird when Heenan could be heard and then seen saying, "Get a shot of me goin' back to the table and stealin' the tip." Hoo ha! I betcha some post-production geek is without a job today because of that!

J.M. WARGO
WHITEHALL PA

(FSB: I, indeed, noticed that and it was very negligent of me not to include that in a BLOOPER AWARD.)

I would like to applaud the efforts of yourself, Dave Meltzer and others to keep the heat on Vince McMahon. I will say that I've lost a lot of respect for SPORTS ILLUSTRATED over the article about Vince. Is anyone certain that Vince or one of his p.r. people didn't write that article?

MICHAEL MCGOWEN
JERSEYVILLE IL

April Fool joke regarding The Wrestling Channel had me ready to corner the market on blank tapes. I wish such an idea would really materialize. Do they actually have footage from the early '80s on file?

ANDY KING
MIDDLETOWN NY

You did it to me! I will never trust you again. That April Fool issue of MATWATCH was just plausible enough you genuinely had me going. I thought the Cornette on the PBA tour bit was crazy but believable. But THE WRESTLING CHANNEL is an idea which I think could work, particularly with that schedule. You may have given Vince an idea with that. Do you think it would work?

ROBERT GARRISON
GREENWOOD MS

(FSB: I doubt I've out-thought Vince on that. He's probably thought of it and, like me, realizes it would not work. The breadth of the audience would be too narrow and it would never sustain interest of enough viewers to be profitable. Maybe, just maybe, something like this could have worked five years ago when we still had 40 promotions, if all would have cooperated and given it variety. But not now. As for all of that material, one story which surfaced when McMahon bought out Ole Anderson's Georgia group in 1984 was that Vince gained control of the old WCW pre-1984 NTBS studio tapes and erased them so they couldn't be used again. I doubt Vince would be that foolish because that's a gold mine of "lost" episodes which could someday be released on video. A large collection of the tapes are said to be in Ole's garage. At least one old Ric Flair pre-'84 match showed up on Joe Pedicino's old PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK.)

I might actually start watching bowling on TV if (Jim) Cornette was the color commentator. What a sucker I was! I actually began to believe it. One of the deftest hands at comedy I've ever written.

BOB MARKUS
PROVIDENCE RI

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YOU SAID IT!!!

(Continued from Page 5)

(FSB: According to Cornette, he just converted a 7-10 split and the 10 pin bounced so high it landed right on a certain wrestling individual's noggin.)

I did not pay the \$30 for WRESTLEMANIA but I did watch the tape a friend loaned me two days later. Boy, was I not sorry. I might have considered \$15 for the first half of the show, if it had ended with the reunion of Randy Savage with Elizabeth. But I'd have demanded a refund for the whole sloppy second half, except for DiBiase-Virgil.

LINDA LEWIS
WAUKEGAN IL

I thought you were a bit hard on the Hogan-Slaughter match at WRESTLEMANIA. True, the two of them are seven years older than when they started with Vince in '84 but they tried hard and seeing Hogan juice was worth the price of the show. I didn't hear many people complaining about it.

RICHARD JONES
COLUMBIA SC

Even the brain of a genius goes on overload. It's one thing to try to make Sgt. Slaughter the WWF champion again but to try to convince us the Iron Sheik still has a market? Vince must have hit too many late-night parties.

ART CAMPBELL
MOSCOW ID

Nice to see WRESTLEMANIA VII was a total debacle for McMahon. Fans deserve better than shoddy gimmicks. Currently, I'm enjoying Joel Goodhart's Tri-State Wrestling Alliance. Their recent supercard WINTER CHALLENGE II was amazing. Their card drew nearly 1,800 people. The WCW draws only 1,500 monthly and the WWF 5,000. The TWA's doing pretty good, no?

ANTHONY PERTICARO
HOPSTRA UNIVERSITY
HEMPSTEAD NY

Just last week, I was at a friend's house and saw an old tape. On the tape, the Road Warriors (Legion of Doom) wrestled. Paul Ellering was the manager but the Road Warriors were different. It seemed to me that Jake (The Snake) Roberts was one of them. Can you verify for me if that was Jake Roberts?

PEDRO ORTIZ
NEW YORK NY

(FSB: Pedro, you were probably seeing one of the Warriors' early appearances on the pre-1984 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

on TBS. Ellering managed a consortium called The Legion of Doom, which included The Road Warriors (who did not originally wear the exotic face paint), Jake Roberts and King Kong Bundy. The Road Warriors were the national tag team champions, Jake (who was the booker for much of this) in a feud with Ronnie Garvin over the "world" TV title and Bundy as the fatty.)

LETTERS POLICY

All letters to YOU SAID IT! must be signed and a complete address included. Letters will be edited for length and taste. Personal attacks on other letter-writers and profanity will not be tolerated. Copies of letters which appear in other publications will not be published. Letters to: YOU SAID IT!, MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.

MATWATCH SHOPPERS NETWORK

RICH KERIN, 261-61 LANGSTON AVE., GLEN OAKS NY 11004, is selling videotapes, magazines and other memorabilia, including back issues of the WRESTLING OBSERVER, OBSERVER yearbooks and back issues of PRO WRESTLING TORCH from issue 86 to the present. Rich will provide a catalog free for a large-sized SASE.

CHRIS MARTIN, P.O. BOX 20383, SPRINGFIELD IL 62703, has a free list of tapes and magazines for sale or trade.

JOSEPH PERRY, P.O. BOX 191425, SACRAMENTO CA 95819-1425, is looking for tapes of New Wave Wrestling from Britain, LPWA, USWA/Dallas and PRO WRESTLING '91. He has USWA/Memphis, Herb Abrams' UWP, All Japan, New Japan and Portland to trade.

TURNBUCKLE is Joe's newsletter available at a discount to MATWATCH readers who mention this plug. A 4-issue subscription if \$5. Write TURNBUCKLE at the above address.

WRESTLING THEN AND NOW is EVAN GINZBURG's popular bulletin. It's \$1.25 an issue, \$12 a year. Overseas add \$1 per issue. Orders: BOX 471, OAKLAND GARDENS STATION, FLUSHING NY 11364.

WINDY CITY 1991 WRESTLING EXTRAVAGANZA is taking shape. Diane Devine and Juda Williamson are hosting the fans' con-fab in Chicago July 19-21. Pre-registration is \$15. Diane now has an itinerary of events. It includes a show in Monroe WI on July 19 and a morning ring event the next day prior to a Saturday night Windy City show. For schedule and details, write Diane at 4150 E. IOWA AVE., SUITE 406, DENVER CO 80222.

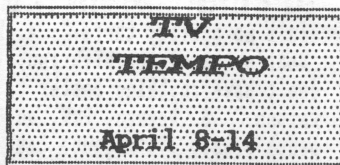
ANTHONY PERTICARO, NASSAU HALL, BOX 1013, ROOM 101-C, HOPSTRA UNIVERSITY, wants tapes of: the original Sheik, Dusty Rhodes, Kevin Sullivan (particularly the Rhodes-Sullivan Florida 1982-83 feud), Abdullah the Butcher, Mil Mascaras, Dos Caras, Stan Hansen, Dory Funk Jr., Terry Funk, Ric Flair or Bob Backlund. He's also interested in anything related to The Chain Gang, the Convict and the original Mummy.

(SHOPPERS NETWORK continues on Page 9)

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(LUCHA LIBRE) - El Felino/El Solar II vs. El Rey Halcon/El Comando Ruso (no result); La Aguila Solitaria/El Ciclon Rami rez/El Pantera II d. La Bestia Salvaje/El Supremo I/El Supremo II 2-3; Mogur/El Justiciero/Huracan Sevilla d. Herodes/Gargola el Sultan/El Gran Sheik 2 straight; Super Astro/El Volador/El Angel Asteca d. Ponzona/El Espectro Jr./El Espectro de Ultratumba 2-3; Pierroth Jr./El Satanico/Jerry Estrada d. Octagon/Atlantis/Mascara Sagrada; (SEGMENT) 48th anniversary of Lucha Libre at La Arena Coliseo; (NEWS CONF.) Suspension of ref El Gran Davis lifted. RESTHOLD.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: {REPLAY} Bobby Heenan loses pose-down and cash at blackjack table; Jimmy Snuka d. Lanny Poffo; (UPDATE) Sgt. Slaughter burns Hulk Hogan; Davey Boy Smith d. Jeff Sword; Jake Roberts d. John Allen. After, Earthquake announced for next match & Jake scares Tenta w. Damien; (SKIT) Warlord does 19 reps w. "500 lbs.;" (SKIT) Fat woman picked to dance w. Slick & Heenan; (REPLAY) Ted DiBiase/Sherri Martel attack Roddy Piper; Butch Miller d. Demolition Crush by count-out; (SEGMENT) Piper plays bagpipes, Heenan fails miserably trying to play tuba; Big Bossman double countout vs. Rick Martel but Bubba chases off Mountie after; (SEGMENT) Mike Rotunda as The IRS Man; (SKIT) Sherri reads "Advice to the Lovelorn" letters; Curt Hennig d. Dale Wolfe; Virgil d. Brooklyn Brawler; Power & Glory d. Kevin Greenough/Mike Samples; (SKIT) Heenan comes out wearing kilts & Piper zings him. DRAW-PLUS.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Jimmy Snuka d. Sharkey; Mountie d. Ludden; Jim Duggan d. Randy Starr; Rockers d. Mark Ming/Lou Spiccoli; Warlord d. Jim Powers; Col. Mustafa d. Jim Evans; Legion of Doom d. Pez Whatley/Luger. RESTHOLD. [SUPERSTARS]: Kerry Von Erich d. Black Knight; (UPDATE) Jake Earthquake angle; Bret Hart d. Barry O; Berserker d. Jim Kolhep; Tugboat d. Brooklyn Brawler; (SEGMENT) Irwin R. Shuyster tells taxpayers not to use too many deductions; Nasty Boys d. Stephen DeLeon/Riki Ataki; (FUNERAL PARLOR) Undertaker ambushes Ultimate Warrior & locks Ult in Paul Bearer's corner. Road agents feebly try to pry lid loose for three minutes before opening it & having to give Ult CPR to revive him. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(LPWA) - Terri Power d. La Gata; Magnificent Mimi d. Alma Alvarez; Reggie Bennett d. Candi Divine; Nasty Girls d. Mighty Mites; The Beast double countout vs. Comrade Orga; (LOUISVILLE SLUGGER) Jim Cornette w. Reggie Bennett. RESTHOLD.

(USWA/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: {SOUTHERN TITLE/CAGE} Jeff Jarrett d. Tom Prichard to regain belt but Paul Heyman Sr. reverses when he finds Prichard's chain in Jeff's trunks. Elliot Mays comes down aisle and holds up belt; (TEXAS TITLE/THUNDERDOME) Eric Embry d. Bill Dundee by countout when Tojo Yamamoto tosses ether rag for Eric to use on Bill. Mays holds up Texas belt, fines Embry "\$5,000;" Gary Young/Billy Travis/Danny Davis d. Steve Austin/The Boogeyman/Steven Dane. RESTHOLD. [BEST OF CHAMPIONSHIP]: Davis d. Sgt. O'Reilly; Prichard/Embry d. Bill Rush/Mickey Jay & Embry piledrives both after. Jarrett saves; Texas Hangmen d. Night Train Jackson/Kevin Collins; (From PIPKIN BUILDING/USWA TAG TITLE) Hangmen d. Eddie Gilbert/Jarrett to win belts; Dundee d. Pistolero by DQ when Austin runs in; Austin d. Jarrett by DQ when Dundee comes out swinging 2x8. J.C. Ice attacks Bill, who juices. RESTHOLD.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - Joel Deaton d. Mad Dog Joe; Mike Servich d. Nick Busich when Busich pulls himself down for pin; (LPWA) Nasty Girls d. Bambi/Malaya Hosaka by DQ; (CLASSIC/BRUISER'S

BEDLAM) Great Wojo d. Calypso Joe; Randy Rose d. Cowboy Bill Dalton; (INTL/JAPAN) ; (GA. TV TITLE) Billy Black d. Fabian to win belt by holding tights. RESTHOLD.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - (1986) Curt Hennig d. Steve Regal; (VIDEO) "Nobody Does It Better;" (ANGLE) Destruction Crew brag about putting Wahoo McDaniel, Jerry Blackwell, Greg Gagne out of wrestling; Scott LeDoux d. Larry Zbyszko when Larry Hennig decks Larry Z and raises Scott's hand. RESTHOLD.

(IWCCW) - Tasmaniac d. Cornbread Phillips; (From SPAIN) The Hammer d. Abdul Singh; Kevin Von Erich d. Zap; Kevin d. Hawaiian Hurricane; Ivan/Scott Putski; (BILL APTER'S PRESS CONF.) Putskis; Chief Thundermountain d. New Jersey Nightmare I; (IWCCW TAG TITLE) Billion \$ Babies d. Undertakers to win belts. BOMB.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - [FLORIDA TITLE] Full Force d. Masked Superstar to win tourney & belt after 2nd referee tells first ref Superstar scored original pin w. leg on ropes; (ANGLE) Force chases Superstar after being insulted by Penelope Paradise; [SOUTHERN TITLE] Nasty Ned Brady double countout vs. Dick Slater. Brady retains belt. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(PORTLAND) - J.J. Funk d. Al Madril by DQ when Madril decks Barr after Funk accidentally decks Sandy & Sandy refuses to DQ J.J.; Bart Sawyer/Mike Winner d. Grappler/Equalizer 2-3 falls by DQ when Equalizer accidentally elbows Grappler & Grap tosses faces over top. Grap finally attacks Eq & Sawyer helps him out; Doug Masters d. Larry Oliver by holding trunks; (ANGLE) Masters announces he's struck it rich in Las Vegas slot machine; (ANGLE) Grappler says he found note w. slobber on it and it belonged to Psycho Sam & says people calling Sam "jailbird" have driven him over edge. DRAW.

(USWA/WMC) - Dundee d. Sgt. O'Reilly in 14 sec.; (PIPKIN BLDG.) Austin/J.C. Ice d. Dundee/Uptown Bruno when J.C. has foot on ropes to pin Bruno but Bill pulls down Jamie's pants & spansks him; (ANGLE) J.C. says he knows he's been wrong & tells Bill he wants to go home & talk things over. They embrace & walk off together but Texas Hangmen clothesline Bill. They & Jamie kick & stomp Dundee; Prichard/Austin d. Don Kelly/T.D. Steel; (PIPKIN/CAGE MATCH/S. TITLE) Jarrett d. Prichard to regain belt but Prichard ambushes Jeff in aisle, tosses him back in & Tom/Hangmen/Austin quadruple on Jeff; (CLIPS) Robert Fuller "injuring" Jarrett in 1989; (VIDEO) Fuller in "Bad to the Bone;" (PIPKIN/USWA VS. TEXAS TITLES) Jerry Lawler no contest vs. Embry when ref Frank Morelli piledriven & Prichard chokes Lawler through cage w. belt. Keirn climbs cage to save but Embry flees w. both belts; Eddie Gilbert d. Scorpion in 22 sec.; (RETROSPECTIVE) Gilbert-Embry saga; (ANGLE) During interview, Eddie ambushed by Embry/Prichard/Austin. Eric creams Eddie w. Texas belt. Eddie juices; Embry d. Mickey Jay (19 sec.); (ANGLE) Embry argues w. Eddie's friend John L. Gilliam. Embry slaps John L., tosses him in ring, Prichard doubles on him. Eric piledrives John L. from top rope. Eddie/Dundee/Danny Davis save; Hangmen d. Davis/Jackson using noose on Night Train. DRAW...weak matches, good angles.

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must
See PILEDRIVER - Excel-
lent. POWERSLAN - Good
DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD
- Fair. BOMB - Poor.
PLUS - Midscale rating.

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(SOUTH ATLANTIC) - Chris Chavis vs. Ivan Koloff ends during commercial. Finish not shown, explanation not given; Robert Fuller/Sam Houston d. American G.I./Butch Malone & Fuller/Houston destroy G.I. after. Bobby Fulton makes save; Tommy Seabolt d. Nazi Stormtrooper but a supposedly-hurt Vince Torrelli runs in on Seabolt. The two brawl. BOMB.

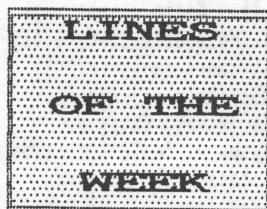
(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Dustin Rhodes d. Greg Sawyer; Big Josh/Tommy Rich d. Mike Samples/Keith Hart; Ron Simmons d. Rip Rogers but Butch Reed runs in & he & Ron brawl into aisle; Sting d. Tom Sawyer; (WNN) Owen Hart d. Keith Smart, (W. WAR) Stan Hansen-Big Van Vader brawl, Nikita Koloff creams Lex Luger w. U.S. title belt; Barry Windham d. Tommy Angel; (SUPER-BRAWL CONTROL CENTER) Gordon Solie announces Young Pistols vs. Freebirds for U.S. tag title May 19; Larry Zbyszko d. Thad Clark; Brian Pillman d. Arn Anderson by DQ when Sid Vicious runs in. Arn comes off top on Brian's arm & the 2 doubleteam until Big Josh chases w. axhandle. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Steiners d. Don Allen/Lou Fabiano; Terrence Taylor d. Tim Parker; Dustin Rhodes d. Larry Zbyszko but Taylor runs in after & the two throw Dustin over the top. Ricky Morton tries to save but gets destroyed until Dustin revives. Dustin challenges Mr. Hughes; One-Man Gang d. Rick Hardrock; Big Van Vader d. Mark Kyle; Bobby Eaton d. Pat Rose; (SUPERBRAWL CONTROL) Gordon announces Arn Anderson-Bobby Eaton TV title match; Freebirds d. Davey Johnson/Terry Bronson; (SEGMENT) Luger-Koloff saga, Meadowlands match where Nikita d. Lex by DQ when Luger decks ref w. chain. Lex & Nikita brawl in hall to pullapart; [DANGER ZONE] Paul E. with Arn on why Horsemen appear to be splitting; Windham d. Angel; Sting d. Tony Mella; Ric Flair d. Pillman by DQ when El Gigante saves Pillman from doubleteam by Anderson. Arn had saved Flair from six-count pinfall by Pillman during ref bump. DRAW-PLUS.

[MAIN EVENT]: Windham d. Joey Maggs; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. w. JYD, who KO's a taunting Teddy Long. Gang carries Teddy back to dressing room; Steiners d. Jim Boss/Tom Burke; Bobby Eaton d. Chuck Coates; Pillman draw vs. Anderson but Barry & Arn stuff piledrive Brian from top after; Other winner: El Gigante. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WCW/SYN) - [WORLD WIDE]: Sting/Luger d. Mark Merol/Joe Cezana; El Gigante d. Bronson; One-Man Gang d. Greg Sawyer; (SUPERBRAWL CONTROL) Gordon announces Pistols-Freebirds match; Dan Spivey d. Santo; (6-MAN) Junkyard Dog/Ricky Morton/Tommy Rich d. State Patrol/Dutch Mantel; Freebirds win squash but Young Pistols save jobbers & chase 'Birds; Taylor d. Big Josh by DQ when Josh is caught using laptop he got away from Terrence. He threatens to bash it with axhandle but Curtis Hughes calmly retrieves it. RESTHOLD.

[WCW PRO]: N/A. For at least a temporary period, I'm going to need a correspondent on this one. I'll call anyone who sees the WGN or WPIX show for results on Saturdays.



1. Eddie Gilbert, WMC, to Eric Embry: "This week, I'm gonna be Chef Boy-ar-Dee and I'm gonna see that you're cooked WELL DONE!" 2. Bobby Heenan, PTW, on large female fan: "You've heard of SOUL TRAIN? This is the whole caboose." 3. Roddy Piper/Heenan, PTW, after Roddy holds mirror underneath Hee-

nan's kilts: (BH) "You're invading my privacy." (RP) "There ain't no privacy there." 4. Masked Superstar, SUNCOAST PRO: "What's the matter with you, (Boris) Malenko? We know you don't have anything better to do than watch ALL IN THE FAMILY reruns." 5. Heenan, PTW, as Vince McMahon tries to help him bench press: "I'm gonna take you to Judge Wapner for this." 6. Heenan, PTW, on audience counting Warlord's reps: "You know the most amazing thing? That these people can count to 19." 7. Heenan/Piper, PTW: (BH) "I'm just looking at your knee." (RP) "Looking at my knee? You lonesome?" 8. Heenan, PTW, to Piper: "You do play the bagpipes...you're not like Milli Vanilla, are you?" 9. Piper/Vince McMahon/Randy Savage, WWF-SU: (V) "Who is the Black Knight?" (RS) "Andre the Giant." (RP) "Not with that belly. Is it a woman?" 10. Piper, PTW: "You'll find me meaner than the L.A.P.D."

11. Paul E. Dangerously, PH, on Tony Gilliam: "I sounded better at my bar mitzvah." 12. Henry Raines/Superstar, SUNCOAST PRO: (HR) "That's not oil dripping on the table, is it?" (S) "Nah, it's (Dick) Slater's sweat." 13. Arn Anderson, WCW: "Excuses are the crutches of the untalented." 14. Superstar, SUNCOAST PRO: "I work hard for my money. I get a Mountain Dew every once in a while." 15. McMahon/Piper, WWF-SU: (V) "Does anyone know the origin of the word berserk?" (RP) "Anyone who dates Sensational Sherri." 16. Marty Jannetty, WWF-SU: "We're flying so high you have to let an air traffic controller know we're in the area." 17. Doug Masters, PORTLAND, on "striking it rich": "Donald Trump asks ME for money now." 18. Ross/Paul E., PH: (PE) "The Young Pistols? Steve and Tracy?" (JR) "No, Joe and Sam---the young .45s." 19. Piper, WWF-SU: "The only thing the Nasty Boys and the Legion of Doom have in common is the same barber." 20. Larry Zbyszko, WCW PRO: "It's a bird...it's a plane...it's Owen Hart."

21. Michael St. John, USWA: "I'm losing my voice from the odor of Tojo's ether rag." 22. Steve Keirn, WMC, on Embry: "You overweight bottle of milk cellulite." 23. Ross, PWN: "The Royal Family reminds me of the old Shepherders."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Piper, PTW: "DiBiase's the new Danny Partridge. You know, Danny Partridge rolls a transvestite and hides in the closet." 2. Superstar, SUNCOAST PRO: "Anybody want to know what's been going on with Dick Slater, just look at a 1976 wrestling magazine. That's as current as things are with Slater. Ain't nothin' goin' on with him." 3. Ross, PH, on Larry Z: "What has he ever done to earn legendary status? He's never won a major WCW championship." 4. Savage, WWF-SU, on Warrior sealed in casket: "He ended my career. I don't like him. But I don't like this, either. It's wrong."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Superstar, SUNCOAST PRO: "Why do they call you Dirty Dick Slater? You have to take a bath or something?" 2. Paul E., PH: "Is Sting hurt? How come he keeps yelling, 'OWWWW'?" 3. Paul E., WCW: "What kind of guy is the One-Man Gang to take his advice from someone who looks like he just stuck his finger in a 100-volt socket (Kevin Sullivan)?"

BEST PICTURES - 1. PTW, Heenan bench press. 2. PTW, Female fan jitterbugging w. Heenan. 3. PTW, Heenan trying to play tuba. 4. PTW, Sherri kissing Heenan. 5. PTW, Heenan wearing kilts. 6. SUNCOAST PRO, Nasty Ned Brady ring entrance on cycle. 7. SUNCOAST PRO, Slater scuffling with Superstar. 8. WMC, Embry attacking Gilliam. 9. WCW, Pillman-Flair match.

BEST INTERVIEW - Eddie Gilbert, WMC, after attack on Gilliam. THAT's the Eddie we all know!

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NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. SUGAR RAY VIRGIL (Sean Mooney on Virgil). 2. SWEET TOOTS (Sherri Martel on Vince McMahon). 3. DR. RUTH (Piper on Sherri). 4. MISSY (DON'T CALL ME BUBBLES) HYATT (Jim Ross on Hyatt). 5. THE SIX STOOGES (Piper on WWF road agents). 6. THE CLEARASIL POSTER BOY (Ross on Gilliam). 7. THE DANNY PARTRIDGE OF THE WWF (Piper on Jimmy Hart). 8. MR. ICE WATER (Gordon Solie on Curtis Hughes).

ENGLISH LESSON - Penelope Paradise, SUNCOAST PRO:
"Malenko, all of that Poli-Grip has WENT to your brain."

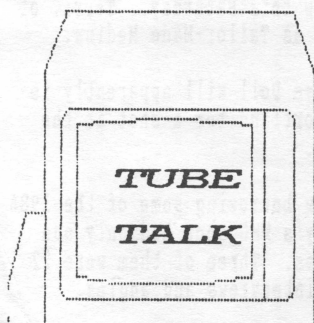
ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Tom Prichard, WMC: "I don't work by the hour..." 2. Savage, WWF-SU: "A picture's worth a thousand words."

RIC FLAIR AWARD - Eddie Gilbert, WMC: "I am THE man."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - 1. WMC, for losing picture during Embry-Lawler match twice & bad audio during most of show.

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. Heenan, "Milli VANILLA." 2. The Wrestling DeeJay, WMC: "Lawler choking away on Prichard," when it was Prichard choking Lawler with a leather belt.

BOO AWARD - SOUTH ATLANTIC, for not showing end of Ivan Koloff-Chris Chavis match and failing to tell viewers what happened. What kind of credibility is that, particularly in your first match of the show?



The Flair-Pillman match was solid between the two but eventually, Pillman is going to have to get an upset win, instead of these near-misses with the Horsemen....We should know this week if a deal has been sealed for that radio talkfest on a 50,000 watt East Coast station we told you about two weeks ago....Jerry Lawler is continuing his Sunday morning WMC show during his layoff but

did not appear on the Saturday show last week....In an upcoming issue, we'll feature the "A Week in the Life of MATWATCH" piece we had to drop from the annual....John Arezzi of PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT in New York has a new 900 line and also an autograph show April 27 at Colonial Bowling Lanes on Staten Island. Expected to appear are Paul Orndorff, Cactus Jack, Boris Zhukov, Lanny Poffo and Barry Horowitz. Admission is \$5....SUNCOAST PRO will expand its cable audience in May. Currently, the show is on in Pinellas County, Manatee, Sarasota and Tallahassee. Next SUNCOAST taping is May 3 at the Manatee (FL) Civic Center...WCW drew an 8.3 rating in the Atlanta market for the April 6 episode...WMC USWA show will be moved all over the schedule for the next six weeks because of NBA playoffs on NBC. Most airings will be at 10:30 a.m....Both WCW syndie shows are gone in Memphis, so the May Memphis live card is canned....Remember, JIM HERD MEETS THE PRESS (Meltzer/Keller/yours truly) on THE WRESTLING HOTLINE April 27.... We'll review WCW SUPERSHOW in the next issue. Turner Home Entertainment sent me a copy with THE SIMPSONS and PEE WEE'S PLAYHOUSE on it instead. I get a make good this week...As many as 40 indie stations are thinking of dropping wrestling-

this fall....One of best lines from the DISCOVERY CHANNEL's "In Search of Santos" on the Mexican wrestling/horror movie star El Santo and his son came from the younger Santo: "A young man will think I'm my father and say, 'I saw you on television last night, fighting those mummies.'"....WCW drew about 3,500 at Baltimore Arena Friday night but had biggest crowd in 3 years in Raleigh Saturday....Axel Rotten's UIW will tape for the Baltimore-Washington area Thursday night and we hope to have a report in the next issue....Boris Malenko's UWF (yeah, another Universal) drew 225 in Jackson Springs FL Friday night. Big Jim Magnum d. Nasty Ned Brady by countout and in the 15-man battle royal finale, Man Mountain Brody won by tossing Jumbo Baretta out....Hallelujah! Lance Russell is staying on WCW PRO syndie edition.

MATWATCH SHOPPERS NETWORK

(Continued from Page 6)

REV. JOSEPH A. ESCOBAR, O.P., ST. PIUS CHURCH, 55 ELMHURST AVE., PROVIDENCE RI 02908, is interested in corresponding with anyone who can provide info on aspiring wrestlers in the Rhode Island-Massachusetts areas.

JAMES PARKER, P.O. BOX 23522, CHATTANOOGA TN 37422, is interested in tapes of indies, UWF, Memphis, IWCCW and Japan.

THE SWEET DADDY SIKI/RON HUTCHINSON PRO WRESTLING TRAINING CENTER is available for inquiries. T-shirts from the school are \$12 (U.S.) in adult sizes M to XL. CHECK or MONEY ORDER only. Order or write to the school at: P.O. BOX 22523, COXWELL POSTAL SERVICE, 300 COXWELL AVE., TORONTO ONT M4L 3W7.

JAMES BECKLEY's WRESTLING TAPE EXCHANGE has a catalog for a SASE. Tapes are \$20 and are from 2-6 hours each. CASH or MONEY ORDER only to: 2417-8 BARLEY CLUB COURT, ORLANDO FL 32821.

THOMAS J. FILLIUS, 609 HESTON RD., GLASSBORO NJ 08028, wants to buy tapes from all groups, particularly indies and any old Florida and Bill Watts-UWF material.

RIP ROGERS, 189 MARSH DR., SEYMOUR IN 47274, wants to let all independent promoters know he's available for dates. Yes, it's THE Rip Rogers.

MATWATCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

MATWATCH is published weekly (four double issues per year) at the following rates:

(U.S.) \$5 for 5 issues, \$10 for 11 issues, \$15 for 16.
(CANADA) \$6 for 5 issues, \$12 for 11 issues, \$18 for 16.
(OVERSEAS) \$9 for 5 issues, \$18 for 11, \$27 for 16.

SPECIAL NOTE: U.S. rates will go up to the same as Canadian rates after June 1 to handle recent postal rate hikes.

GIFT OFFER: For every 5-issue gift set you give, you receive one bonus issue of MATWATCH. The same is true for referrals from you.

CHECK, CASH or MONEY ORDER to: MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305. Please print name and address CLEARLY on the envelope.

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MATWATCHING

BUILDING SID: Betting odds on Sid Vicious in the WWF is he'll get a big win at SURVIVOR SERIES and perhaps be the victor at the 1992 ROYAL RUMBLE to get him ready for a showdown with Hogan. Remember, this group needs a big WRESTLEMANIA, so the build may not be over two years as has been the past track record.

MOTHER NBC, MAY 1?: SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT taped in Omaha Monday night. A Warrior-Slaughter match was added after NBC rejected the original card. That's a first but the net has not been happy with the recent ratings.

A TORN BICEP: Tom Zenk back from a torn bicep muscle. As of last week, doctors were saying he'd be laid up for 4-6 weeks. But Tom expected to work The Omni Sunday night.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?: Zenk was supposed to be the babyface with Paul E. Dangerously and Diamond Dallas Page on that MTV DIAL MANIA hour April 5. The "Mr. X" was Diamond Jim Brady. Paul E. and Page may get a return go.

KING'S COURT: Jerry Lawler definitely off 4-6 weeks off to rest muscle spasms in his neck. His world vs. Texas title cage match vs. Eric Embry ended in a no contest when ref Frank Morrell was knocked down. Embry walked out with both belts.

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Eddie Gilbert went against Embry. The angle Saturday on WMC where Eddie's buddy from Lexington TN John L. Gilliam was piledriven by Eric led to the strongest interview by Eddie in more than two years. I wonder if Eddie thumped John behind the ear on the way to Nashville.

MORE MEMPHIS: Steve Keirn and Bill Dundee teamed to go after the USWA tag belts against the Texas Hangmen. J.C. Ice took on Uptown Bruno in a hair vs. hair. El Grande Pistolero (Gypsy Joe) defended the light heavyweight belt vs. Night Train Jackson and Danny Davis opened vs. Keith Roberson.

THE IMPORT: Robert Fuller came in to team with Jeff Jarrett against Tom Prichard and Steve Austin in what will be a short-term program. Again, only a six-bout card.

CANNED HEAT: Some of Jarrett's people were not thrilled with Davis giving an interview to Jeff Osborne's CASSETTE WRESTLING NEWS but I'm told heads have cooled.

COLUMBUS TV: Last Tuesday night in Columbus, WCW announced all of the SUPERBRAWL card and Sid Vicious received a major push, on the eve of backing out on renewing his deal.

MORE COLUMBUS: A Brian Pillman-Barry Windham rematch, taped for two Saturdays hence, brought tremendous heat into Municipal Auditorium with cups and ice being tossed in the ring afterward. Watch for Arn Anderson to get involved.

ANOTHER KO: Also in Columbus, Missy Hyatt decked the fool out of Paul E. Dangerously. Insiders tell us Missy & Paul will probably be part of some tag matches (a la the 1986 Cornette-Baby Doll series) during the BASH tour. That will go

with the cage and scaffold matches.

THEY'RE COMING: Jim Herd told me in our last conversation he hopes at least two or three of the Japanese stars will ap-

pear on the June 12 CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS. Hiroshi Hase and Kensuke Sasaki are likely to appear and Jushin Liger a maybe.

THE NEXT EGG DOME: One match being bandied about for the January Egg Dome WCW/New Japan SUPERSHOW II is a Liger-Brian Pillman junior heavyweight title match. WCW will likely recognize a jr. heavy title, whether Liger's or another's, soon.

BASH DETAILS: A few changes have had to be made in the BASH with Vicious leaving and some are not ready for release.

KNOXVILLE TIME: That June 12 CLASH will be in Knoxville. I am going to try to make it so if any Tennessee readers want to join up, let me know. I'm told a Flair-Eaton 2-out-of-3 fall main event is the likely topline.

A NEW SCHOOL: The Georgia Academy of Demolition and Mayhem is the new Bill Eadie/Joe Pedicino wrestling school. Temporary headquarters will be at the Auction Barn in Alpharetta GA.

WHERE TO WRITE: For the many who ask how to break into wrestling, write the Academy at: 1692 SPRINGER ST., ATLANTA GA 30318. Write in care of Eadie. He'll be head coach and Nick Busich and Steve Lawler chief trainers.

OLD TIMERS' NIGHT: On last week's AWA classics, a match was announced for a small town in Minnesota with the Destruction Crew against Greg Gagne and Wahoo McDaniel.

THE FEUD BEGINS: The Portland feud between Grappler (Len Denton) and Equalizer is now for real after a two-month build. The two were to square off on Portland TV Saturday night.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: Terri Power, now fit again, will take on Judy Martin on the Portland show this Saturday. Terri, of course, began her run for Don Owen as Tailor-Made Medina.

REUNION CITY: Rex King and Steve Doll will apparently reunite as the Southern Rockers in Portland for a shot at the vacant Pacific Northwest tag belts.

AN OLD STORY: Eric Embry is now borrowing some of the 1986 Dusty Rhodes TV strategy. Saturday's WMC show had only one studio match longer than two minutes. Three of them were 22 seconds or less, followed by long interviews and angles.

ANOTHER TAPING: The indie WWA group tapes TV May 3 in Knoxville. Johnny and Davey Rich, Pez Whatley, the Mongolian Stomper and many of the Tennessee regulars will appear.

NO CORN, FOLKS: Jim Cornette was to be approached one more time by WCW about returning for the BASH tour but don't expect it. Corny is reasonably happy with his life now, working indie dates and the LPWA and I wouldn't be surprised to see him affiliated with another venture soon.

NETWORKING: Johnny Ace nursing a broken elbow suffered during a match with Cactus Jack in Japan. Cactus is reportedly close to getting a 20-week-a-year offer for Japan work.

LOW NUMBERS: One reason cable wrestling ratings were so low last week---TV numbers in general were down. The top-rated network sports show, an Bulls-76ers game, only drew a 4.9.

It was the lowest-rated weekend for sports in network history.

MORE CLEARANCES: LPWA has just been cleared on indies in Birmingham and Jacksonville.

The Angle

**WAS UNDERTAKER-
WARRIOR TOO MUCH
FOR CHILDREN?**

**WWF SUPERSTARS OF WRESTLING, Syndicated,
April 13.**

There was Road Warrior Animal spiking the eye of Dusty Rhodes. Terry Funk putting a plastic bag over the head of Ric Flair. Eddie Gilbert attempting manslaughter by running down Jerry Lawler with a car. And now the sealing of the Ultimate Warrior in a casket.

I knew what was coming here, so for an adult who understands what wrestling is all about, I could deal with it. But the World Wrestling Federation draws the largest volume of children ages 2-11 among television wrestling shows. And I continue to be concerned with the responsibility of wrestling, in general, to that audience.

True, most kids in schoolyards or backyards don't have coffins as playtoys. Further true, the Flair-Funk angle of 1989 was a blatant adaptation of one of the most accident-susceptible incidents for children.

But refrigerators are vulnerable appliances with air-tight danger. And I have not soon forgotten the time in first grade when I was locked in a cloak closet at school with no windows or open slots at the bottom of the door. That prank has left me claustrophobic to this day.

As an angle, this was extraordinarily successful for those in the surrealistic world of wrestling. The Undertaker and Paul Bearer became living testaments to their characters in as demonstrative a fashion as possible. Plus, the production values in the Funeral Parlor segments are lavish. Even though the WWF road agents were a modern-day Keystone Cops trying to pry the coffin open, they added to the Houdini drama of whether the Warrior would be saved.

One thing for the WWF, when they go for the big angle, they milk it all the way. It doesn't die as soon as the commercial break comes. Vince McMahon, Randy Savage and Roddy Piper continued to refer to it in the remaining 15 minutes. The touch of having Piper check on him added intensity.

And Savage's most important contribution came with his line, "He ended my career. I don't like him. But I don't like this, either. This is not right." At least the kids knew Randy didn't endorse suffocation.

But I still don't like angles where the ultimate message is trying to kill someone. And at a time when many TV stations are taking a closer look at the content of wrestling shows, one wonders if this one was worth the risk.

Florida Indie

**SUNCOAST PRO
GIVES ITS ALL**

**SUNCOAST PRO WRESTLING, airs on cable
access in 4 Florida cities.**

No one will confuse SUNCOAST PRO WRESTLING with the WWF. But for an small independent promotion, it possesses some impressive production values.

Henry Raines' Central Florida-based group recently completed a Florida title tournament to go along with its Southern belt. Like most indies, SUNCOAST PRO draws a hardcore base of fans which doesn't get enough of a fill with the offerings of the "big two."

A recent viewing of the taping from the Manatee Civic Center showed a nice multicamera setup with a quality ring angle elevated similarly to the WWF 30-degree downward look.

Henry, as lead announcer, is---to say the least---laid back and there are times I want him to argue more with his heel color commentators. Boris Malenko, as a face color man, is too calm compared to his days when I remember him as the most hated man in Florida with a personality to burn.

If this group has a budding performer in the ring and at the mike, it is the Masked Superstar. Larry Zbyszko-quick with a line, the Superstar (not Bill Eadie) only needs to learn timing. At times, he spits out rejoinders so machine-gun fast, he's unintelligible. But he can nail victims with a priceless "strongest comment" (i.e., "You want to know what's going on with Dick Slater. Just pick up a 1976 wrestling magazine because nothing's been going on with him since.")

This group actually uses intelligible, well-mixed ring music and the touch of Nasty Ned Brady coming to the ring on a motorcycle for his match with Slater was one found in few indies. What impresses me is, despite being an obvious minor league circuit, SUNCOAST PRO makes the most of what it has. And the production is on a level that most hardcore tape traders should check it out.

The Discovery Channel

**SANTO: A FILM
WITH FLAVOR, STYLE**

**THE INCREDIBLY DIFFERENT FILM SHOW, The
Discovery Channel, April 13, 11 p.m.**

Cable's sleeper documentary, nature and outdoor channel is hardly the place one expects to find material on pro wrestling. But the Saturday night hour profiling the life of the Mexican wrestler El Santo and his son as science-fiction/horror film stars was a class depiction of wrestlers without focusing on wrestling.

The filmmakers juxtaposed footage of the elder El Santo in his black-and-white movies with color footage of the son in almost tandem movement. Interviews were presented with fans and co-stars of El Santo. As one said, "I'm in Mexico City but I don't think of it as that. It's Santo City to me."

Sci-fi films such as "The Wrestling Women Meet the Aztec Mummy" are hardly Academy Award-winners but don't tell that to the Mexican audience who regard El Santo and a number of his peers as crossover stars in much the same fashion as action-adventure fans see Fred Dryer.

Since the 1940s, wrestling has been the focus of a virtual comic-book series of films in Mexico where actual wrestlers (usually masked) avenge the threat of demonic powers and aliens. If it sounds a bit like the WWF, it is, only Vince hasn't found a better way than "No Holds Barred" to transform it to film.

As a documentary, this is first-rate. No frills. No fancy production pretenses. Just a good, quality non-fiction story. Worth the time to get a tape.

MATWATCH

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SID BOLTS WCW

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for a comment on the situation. He has continued to fulfill WCW dates in the last week.

The Vicious negotiations have led to a variety of emotions within WCW. Sid Eudy, the person behind the Vicious character, is predominantly well-liked within the group and many of his fellow competitors have wished him the best deal he can get. But a number of WCW higher-ups have been unhappy with Vicious' dealings, suggesting Vicious has failed to adequately consider WCW paid his full salary and medical bills during an enforced seven-month layoff in 1989-90 from a punctured lung.

"McMahon is awfully persuasive the way he brings guys up to his house in limos and impresses them," said one WCW insider. "When he (Sid) was told he'd have that main event against Hogan, that's what he saw. Of course, a lot can change between now and next year. But they'll probably groom him to be the next Hogan if they do with him what they've told him they are. They could spend a year-and-a-half to two years building him as a heel, then he could come to Hogan's aid and turn major babyface."

Vicious is scheduled to end his WCW run with a May 19 show-down against El Gigante (Jorge Gonzales) at SUPERBRAWL in St. Petersburg. At one point during the WCW negotiations, Vicious reportedly told (according to more than one source) the WCW brass he would have to "ask Vince" if he could do the job for Gigante. Insiders say Vicious has agreed to the job, or anything else he's asked to do between now and then. But some are not convinced. "He gave his word he was going to stay here and he's not going to do that," said one well-placed WCW source. "What he does on May 19th remains to be seen." WCW is still expected to place a good deal of emphasis on the Gigante-Vicious match on the remaining shows before SUPERBRAWL.

An official start date for Vicious with Titan has not been announced, though earlier, plans were for him not to begin before September.

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RATINGS RAP

(Continued from Page 4)

CABLE

Week Ending April 9	Rating	Share	Total Homes
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 4/9)	2.6	4.2	1.44 million
WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 4/6)	2.5	6.0	1.42 million
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 4/7)	2.1	5.4	1.19 million
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 4/6)	1.7	7.1	962,200
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 4/7)	1.6	5.8	886,400

SYNDICATION

Week Ending March 31	Rating	Stations	U.S. Coverage
WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION	9.8	218	96%
WCW WRESTLING NETWORK	6.2	162	94%

(NOTE: Syndicated ratings are a cumulative gross rating of all of a promotion's shows. [Ex: if WWF SUPERSTARS does a 3 rating, CHALLENGE a 3 and SPOTLIGHT a 3, that adds up to a cumulative 9 rating for the WWF.] The syndicated figure also includes a percentage of the cable ratings. For WCW, add 57% of the ratings for its cable shows. For WWF, add 55%. [Ex: The 2.5 cable rating for WCW adds 1.4 to its syndicated ratings.]

MATWATCH 1990 ANNUAL

About 15 copies of the MATWATCH 1990 ANNUAL: WHAT WENT WRONG? remain available for \$12.00 (U.S./CANADA) and \$20.00 (OVERSEAS). We are continuing to try to make good the delays from the Postal Service in delivery.

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